



PATENTS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appl. No. 09/171,910 Confirmation No.: 8639  
Applicant(s): DIRK VAN DIJK, ET AL.  
Filed: May 13, 1999  
TC/A.U. 1772  
Examiner: Alicia Chevalier  
Title: PLASTIC-BASED COMPOSITE PRODUCT AND METHOD AND  
APPARATUS FOR MANUFACTURING SAME

Docket No.: VR2-002 (044186.003)  
Customer No.: 25461

**MAIL STOP ISSUE FEE**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

**COMMENTS ON REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

In the Statement Of Reasons For Allowance set forth in the Notice of Allowability of February 11, 2004, Claim 56 is summarized instead of presenting a verbatim copy of the text of Claim 56. The "summary" of Claim 56 leaves out a number of important details, and, therefore, applicants feel compelled to point out that a feature of the present invention is that Claim 56 as allowed refers to particles comprising wood; that is, the particles can contain other components in addition to the wood particles.

A second feature of the allowed Claim 56 is that the product has a chosen principal product direction.

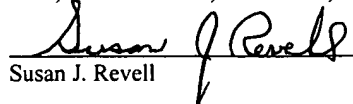
Other features include that the product is elongated and the chosen principal product direction is the longitudinal direction of the product.

With regard to the reference discussed in the "Statement of Reasons for Allowance", namely, the *Cogswell* patent (US 4,559,262), this reference discloses the fabrication of an intermediate product, in the form of a reinforced sheet or band of impregnated filaments. The

---

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on May 5, 2004.

  
Susan J. Revell

impregnated products are chopped into pellets or granules in which the aligned fibers have length from 3 mm up to 100 mm. These may be used in conventional molding or extrusion processes; see, col. 7, lines 34-53. As described in col. 9, line 48, the product suitable for injection molding may be used directly or may be blended with pellets of another thermoplastic product. This other product may contain reinforced fibers up to about 0.25 mm long; see, col. 9, lines 30-65. The intermediate product in the form of pellets will assume a random orientation in the process of molding the final product as is also clear from col. 10, lines 1-8 and lines 22, 23. Also, *Cogswell* fails to disclose long fibers that are randomly oriented.

It is, therefore, believed that, as a result of the differences between *Cogswell* and the present invention, the record shows that the claimed invention herein would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person skilled in the art to which the claimed subject matter pertains.

Respectfully submitted,

SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP

By:   
Robert G. Weilacher, Reg. No. 20,531

Suite 3100, Promenade II  
1230 Peachtree Street, N.E.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30309-3592  
Telephone: (404) 815-3593  
Facsimile: (404) 685-6893

LIT/853063.1